

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 R

DRAFTED BY DOD/ISA/EAPR:JHKELLY:PM/ISO:DPASSAGE

APPROVED BY PM - MR VEST

EA - MR SNEIDER

EA/TB - MR DEXTER

NEA/IRN-MR MORTO

PM/ISO-COLONEL FLEMINGS

EUR/NE-MR BUELL (INFO)

AF/RA-MR NAVEZ (INFO)

DOD/ISA/EAPR - RADM BIGLEY

J-3 - BGEN LOVITT

USN/OP60E - CAPT KRAFT

EA/RA - MR FINCH

NEA/RA - MR GRANT

DOD/ISA/NESA - CDR SICK

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

CINCPACFLT

COMUSMACTHAI

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EXDIS

MO. 11652:GDS

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SUBJECT: US INDIAN OCEAN PATROLS FROM UTAPAO

REF: BANGKOK 8190

1. IN ORDER TO CLEAR THE AIR ON US P-3 OPERATIONS FROM
UTAPAO RTNAB, YOU MAY USE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION, WHICH
HAS BEEN DEVELOPED WITH DOD, TO BRIEF THE RTG (INCLUDING
BOTH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTRY OF
DEFENSE). WE LEAVE TO YOUR JUDGEMENT WHETHER TO BRIEF THE
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MFA AND MOD IN JOINT OR SEPARATE SESSIONS, BUT IF SEPARATE

SESSIONS ARE CHOSEN, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ALL OF THE POINTS BE MADE TO BOTH AUDIENCES. GIVEN THE NATURE OF THESE ACTIVITIES, AND THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO THEM, WE VERY MUCH HOPE THAT THE RTG, EQUIPPED WITH A CLEAR GRASP OF WHAT IS INVOLVED, WILL BE ABLE TO DISPEL ANY MISUNDERSTANDINGS WHICH MAY HAVE ARISEN CONCERNING THE FLIGHTS. AFTER YOUR APPROACH TO THE RTG, WE WILL PROVIDE PRESS GUIDANCE AS REQUESTED PARA 7 REFTEL.

2. A. THE UNITED STATES DEPLOYED US NAVY P-3 SURVEILLANCE AIRCRAFT TO UTAPAO RTNAB WITH THE CONCURRENCE OF THE THAI GOVERNMENT IN 1967. THE ORIGINAL PRIMARY MISSION OF THE P-3 AIRCRAFT WAS SURVEILLANCE OF SEABORNE INFILTRATION INTO INDOCHINA, AND THE NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT SO DEPLOYED HAS AVERAGED AROUND FOUR.

B. AS EARLY AS 1969, THE US NAVY BEGAN TO CONDUCT SURVEILLANCE MISSIONS OVER THE EASTERN INDIAN OCEAN, SPECIFICALLY THE NORTH END OF THE STRAITS OF MALACCA, THE ANDAMAN SEA, AND THE BAY OF BENGAL. FLIGHT PLANS FOR EACH OF THE INDIAN OCEAN MISSIONS WERE FILED WITH THE RTG, A PRACTICE WHICH CONTINUES. (FYI, SHOULD THE THAI ASK ABOUT THE NUMBER OF MISSIONS FLOWN DURING ANY PARTICULAR PERIOD, YOU MAY WISH TO REFER THEM TO RECORDS OF FLIGHT PLANS FILED FROM UTAPAO. SUCH INFORMATION COULD BE COLLATED LOCALLY TO GIVE A PATTERN OF THE RELATIVELY SMALL VOLUME INVOLVED. END FYI).

C. IN NOVEMBER 1973, AT THE TIME OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE HANCOCK CARRIER TASK GROUP INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN, THE EMBASSY BRIEFED SUPREME COMMAND HEADQUARTERS (FORWARD) ON P-3 SURVEILLANCE FLIGHTS IN SUPPORT OF THE HANCOCK TASK GROUP. (FYI, WE NOTE THAT IN THE NOVEMBER 27TH MEMCON REPORTING POL-MIL COUNSELOR AND COMUSMACHTAI BRIEFING OF GENERAL KRIANGSAK, THE POINT WAS MADE THAT THERE WERE NO ADDITIONAL AIRCRAFT ON THE GROUND AT UTAPAO THAN THOSE WHICH WERE NORMALLY AUTHORIZED - 4. THE POL-MIL COUNSELOR ALSO INDICATED THAT WHEN THE USS HANCOCK DEPARTED THE INDIAN OCEAN, THESE PATROLS WOULD PROBABLY CONTINUE. KRIANGSAK INDICATED HIS COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING OF THE

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REQUIREMENT. END FYI).

D. THE USG WISHES TO CONTINUE P-3 FLIGHTS INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN FROM UTAPAO AS IT HAS BEEN DOING SINCE 1969. AS IN THE PAST, SUCH FLIGHTS WILL OCCUR WHETHER OR NOT A TASK GROUP HAS BEEN DEPLOYED INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN. SOME OF THE P-3 FLIGHTS ORIGINATING AT UTAPAO ARE STAGED INTO DIEGO GARCIA FOR PATROLS FROM THAT FACILITY. SUCH FLIGHTS

ARE MADE WITH THE FULL KNOWLEDGE AND CONCURRENCE OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. (FYI, SOME OF THE P-3'S MAY PROCEED TO OTHER SITES, SUCH AS BANDAR ABBAS, FOR PATROL IN THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN. THE NATURE AND FREQUENCY OF FUTURE P-3 FLIGHTS OUT OF BANDAR ABBAS WILL BE A MATTER FOR DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE USG AND GOI. END FYI).

E. THESE P-3 OCEAN SURVEILLANCE FLIGHTS FROM UTAPAO ARE IMPORTANT TO THE USG AS A MEANS OF REGULARLY MONITORING SOVIET AND OTHER NAVAL ACTIVITIES AND ALL TYPES OF MERCHANT SHIPPING INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN. THEY ALSO DERIVE IMPORTANT ACOUSTIC, METEOROLOGICAL AND OCEANOGRAPHIC DATA ON THE INDIAN OCEAN. WE WOULD BE WILLING TO SHARE THE RESULTS OF OUR OPERATIONS WITH THE RTG SHOULD THEY WISH IT, AND WOULD SUGGEST THAT PERHAPS A PERIODIC SUMMARY OF SOVIET NAVAL ACTIVITIES BE PROVIDED TO THE RTARF BY COMUSMACHTAI.

F. P-3 AIRCRAFT STATIONED AT UTAPAO CONTINUE TO PATROL THE SOUTH CHINA SEA IN ORDER TO MONITOR POSSIBLE NORTH VIETNAMESE INFILTRATION TRAWLERS. IN ADDITION, THE P-3 AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN USED FOR TRACKING TRAWLERS SUSPECTED OF NARCOTICS SMUGGLING FROM THAILAND AS A PART OF JOINT US/RTG EFFORTS TO SUPPRESS NARCOTICS TRAFFIC. P-3 AIRCRAFT AT UTAPAO ARE ALSO AVAILABLE FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE MISSIONS IN BOTH THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN.

G. P-3 OCEAN SURVEILLANCE IS A NON-BELLIGERENT, PEACEFUL ACTIVITY. NO UNAUTHORIZED INTRUSION INTO THE NATIONAL AIRSPACE OF ANY INDIAN OCEAN LITTORAL STATE IS INVOLVED. ALL CROSSINGS OF THE ISTHMUS OF KRA ARE MADE ENTIRELY IN THAI AIR SPACE IN ACCORDANCE WITH FLIGHT PLANS FILED WITH THE RTG.

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H. SHOULD THE RTG SO DESIRE, THE USN IS PREPARED TO OFFER PARTICIPATION IN SELECTED SEA SURVEILLANCE MISSIONS WHICH WOULD PROVIDE ORIENTATION IN PATROL OPERATIONS AND ENHANCE RTN SURVEILLANCE SKILLS.

I. THESE FLIGHTS, ORIGINATING FROM UTAPAO, ENABLE US TO MONITOR EVENTS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, AND THUS ARE VALUABLE TO BOTH THE US AND THAILAND; WE HOPE THAT THE RTG SHARES OUR OPINION OF THEIR VALUE. THE INFORMATION WHICH WE WILL PROVIDE TO THE RTG SHOULD ASSIST IT IN EVALUATING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MAJOR POWERS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN BASIN. THE NEED FOR REGULAR FLIGHTS IS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN PROFICIENCY AND TO PRODUCE A STEADY FLOW OF INFORMATION FOR OUR DATA BASE WHICH WE ARE WILLING TO SHARE WITH THE THAI.

J. THERE IS NO COVERT ASPECT TO P-3 OPERATIONS FROM
UTAPAO. WE ARE PREPARED, IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH
THE RTG, TO ACKNOWLEDGE THESE FLIGHTS TO THE NEWS MEDIA,
AND PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT STATIONED
AT UTAPAO FOR THIS PURPOSE.

KISSINGER

NOTE BY OC/T: EXDIS CAPTION ADDED PER S/S-O, MR. NEWLIN.

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NNN

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